IRVINE’S VISION

I’ve often been asked: What was my vision for the Irvine Ranch and when and how did we develop it. Vision is a term most often used by architect/planners to describe what they proposed the Irvine Company to create on its’ and when and how did we arrive at it. What I will attempt to do is take the readers through the thought process we went through in developing our vision.

To begin with I believe it important to remind the readers that the size and location of the Irvine Ranch differentiated us from all other New Towns that emerged in the 1960s. The ranch was located in the middle of Orange County, California, which in 1960 was the fastest growing major county in the United States. Furthermore its’ 93,000-acres was one/fifth of all privately owned land in the county and three times the size of San Francisco. It was bordered by six existing cities, each of which had long designated some portion of the ranch’s edge for their respective expansion. Which, of course, meant that what ever “vision” we might have for that particular piece needed to be developed with their involvement.

For the purpose of this review, however, I will primarily concentrate on the vision of the New Town ultimately to be named Irvine and which now consists of 50,000-acres and has a population in excess of 180,000 residents.

IRVINE: IN SEARCH OF A VISION

University of California concern for surrounding developments.
One mile radius sets first limits on commitment to UC by TIC.

Define Vision: Role in the region. Social/Political visions. Urban/Suburban, sense of place versus sense of community.

Pereira’s 1960 10,000-acre new town vision.
England’s early new town models.
European university towns model
Pereira’s principles: Size, incorporation, school districts, etc. Important early issues to resolve.

Newport Beach village models: Cdm, Balboa Island, Lido Island and the Balboa Peninsula. Divides city into clearly divisible parts.

Eastbluff and Newport Center, our first two villages.